



Welcome

Dear Friends,

First, I want to express my sincere appreciation for your dedication to and interest in the future of Biscayne National Park! We began the process of developing a new General Management Plan (GMP) close to 6 years ago and your involvement has helped us assemble the wide range of draft alternatives are now being reviewed. We know that Biscayne National Park is part of your lives and adds to the quality of life in South Florida, and we, like you, want to keep it that way. The General Management Plan will set the direction for the next 15-20 years.

Five years ago, we began the process of developing the park's first Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) to guide management decisions related to fish and fishing for the next 5 - 10 years. We are working with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission on a plan that will address the status of fish populations in the park, describe desired conditions of fisheries and fish habitat, and detail ways to reach or maintain those conditions.

The distinctions between the two plans are important. The GMP describes desired resource conditions and visitor experiences throughout the park. It is the park's overall guiding roadmap, including areas where specific activities are to be allowed. The FMP is an action plan to achieve a portion of the park's mission. It describes desired conditions of fish populations and habitat, experiences of people fishing in the park, and outlines specific management actions that may be taken to achieve them.

Now, for the task ahead of us. The GMP planning team has devoted many hours considering your suggestions and creating different management zones. Each zone is a different option for managing the same section of the park. We have assembled these zones in a variety of configurations and locations throughout the park to create a range of alternatives. There are five alternatives. One alternative is how the park is managed now and provides a basis for comparing other alternatives. The other four alternatives represent scenarios that provide a range of resource conditions and ways for people to experience the park.

The park is currently reviewing all comments and is putting together a draft plan which will gain be brought to the public to obtain your comments.

We look forward to providing you with another opportunity to participate in this important planning process.

Thank you

Mark Lewis, Park Superintendent